

## Message Text

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ARMY - MR. AUGUSTINE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL NATO CAPITALS IMMEDIATE

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NATO CAPITALS FOR ALL MAAGS AND ATTACHES

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: US-FRG TANK HARMONIZATION PROGRAM

REFERENCE: STATE 189761 DTG 310007Z JULY (NOTAL)

1. THE CONTENTS OF THIS MESSAGE ARE TO BE KEPT WITHIN  
OFFICIAL USG CIRCLES UNTIL SIMULTANEOUS RELEASE BY  
WASHINGTON (0900) AND BONN (1400) AUGUST 4, 1976.

2. ON 3 AUGUST, DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD AND FRG MINISTER  
OF DEFENSE LEBER CONFIRMED AN ADDENDUM TO THE 1974 MEMO-  
RANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE TANK HARMONIZATION PROGRAM.  
THIS NEW AGREEMENT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD  
STANDARDIZATION OF NATO WEAPON SYSTEMS. IN DISCUSSING THIS  
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IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT WITH ALLIES, YOU SHOULD REFER TO

GUIDANCE IN REFTEL AND EMPHASIZE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THE US ARMY WILL EVALUATE THE LEOPARD 2(AV) AS SCHEDULED.

B. REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE EVALUATION, THE US AND THE FRG HAVE NOW AGREED TO STANDARDIZE UPON MANY OF THE MAJOR TANK COMPONENTS. AS A MINIMUM, BOTH COUNTRIES WILL ADOPT STANDARD TRACKS AND ASSOCIATED HARDWARE, INFRA-RED NIGHT VISION EQUIPMENT, GUNNERS TELESCOPE, AND METRIC FASTENERS.

C. AS THE TANK GUN AND TURBINE ENGINE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS MATURE, BOTH COUNTRIES WILL EVENTUALLY ADOPT THE SAME GUN AMMUNITION AND ENGINE TRANSMISSION.

D. THIS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND THE FRG SETS AN IMPORTANT PRECEDENCE FOR POSITIVE ALLIED ACTION IN THE STANDARDIZATION/INTEROPERABILITY AREA. IT PAVES THE WAY FOR OTHER AGREEMENTS WITH ALLIES LEADING TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE STANDARD AND INTEROPERABLE WEAPON SYSTEMS AND A STRONGER ALLIANCE.

3. THE TEXT OF THE 4 AUGUST PRESS RELEASE ON THE ADDENDUM FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD OF THE UNITED STATES AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE GEORGE LEBER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT A MAJOR STEP HAS BEEN TAKEN TOWARD ENHANCING THE LEVEL OF STANDARDIZATION IN THE COMBAT TANK PROGRAMS OF THE TWO NATIONS. THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS HAS RESULTED IN THE JOINT SIGNING OF AN ADDENDUM TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING UNDER WHICH THE TWO TANK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN PROCEEDING SINCE NOVEMBER 1974. THE ADDENDUM WILL ASSURE SIGNIFICANT STANDARDIZATION OF ITEMS THAT DOMINATE THE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT OF OUR TANK FORCES, INCLUDING FUEL, AMMUNITION, GUNS, TRACKS, ENGINES, TRANSMISSIONS AND FIRE CONTROL. THE ADDENDUM ENVISAGES BOTH THE COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF LEOPARD II AND XM-1 TANK DESIGNS AND THE INITIATION OF JOINT ACTIVITIES NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE THESE STANDARDIZATION ELEMENTS INTO THE

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RESPECTIVE NATIONAL PROGRAMS. IT ALSO PROVIDES FOR THE POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION BY OTHER NATO NATIONS IN THESE STANDARDIZATION EFFORTS.

IN VIEW OF THE URGENCY OF OFFSETTING THE SIZEABLE EFFORTS WARSAW PACT NATIONS HAVE BEEN DEVOTING TO IMPROVEMENT OF GENERAL PURPOSE FORCE CAPABILITIES, AND THE CLEAR BENEFITS TO THE ALLIANCE WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ENHANCED

STANDARDIZATION OF OUR MILITARY EQUIPMENTS, THIS IS A  
SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD IN IMPROVING THE NATO DEFENSES  
AND THE CONVENTIONAL DETERRENCE. END TEXT  
4. FYI, THE TEXT OF THE ADDENDUM WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.

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